



April 19, 2016

Sound Transit Board
c/o Board Administrator
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-2826

Dear Sound Transit Board;

This letter provides the City of Kirkland's response to both the Draft ST 3 System Plan released on March 24 by the Sound Transit Board, and the March 24 letter to Kirkland sent by Board Chair Dow Constantine and the three Eastside Board Members.

We understand and respect the challenge faced by the Sound Transit Board in putting together a regional transit package that must serve the needs of a three-county region. We acknowledge that it is not possible for the Board to fund all the projects requested by the communities in the Sound Transit taxing district. However, we are disappointed that the Sound Transit Board did not support the "light rail with flexibility" project proposed by the City in January linking the Totem Lake Urban Center to Bellevue and the region. Of all the candidate projects that Sound Transit examined over the past ten months, transit on the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) is unique in that it is the only project that runs directly through densely populated neighborhoods. Every other High Capacity Transit (HCT) project proposed in the draft plan is aligned on main arterials, elevated, or in tunnels. While there are residents that don't want any type of transit on the corridor, there are many residents who recognize the value of the CKC as a dedicated right of way and wish to see it used to improve mobility on the eastside. The "light rail with flexibility" concept fully funds a light rail line to Totem Lake but allows the flexibility for a different mode such as Bus Rapid Transit to be selected after an extensive conversation with the community.

Kirkland is a smart growth city that has taken the land use actions necessary to create a progressive, transit-friendly city zoned for urban densities. Current and planned growth is dependent on regional transit service. The development is arriving at an overwhelming pace. Google just cut the ribbon on a new building that has doubled the size of its campus. Two massive mixed-use developments, Kirkland Urban and the Totem Lake Mall, recently broke ground in 2016. Kirkland has 3600 residential units, 350,000 square feet of university expansion, and 1.4 million square feet of commercial development resulting in nearly 4000 jobs in the permit pipeline today. The growth is here and to be sustainable, Kirkland requires regional transit connections.

With such a compelling case for transit, it is difficult for our Council and our residents to understand why Sound Transit decided not to serve this growth with HCT on the CKC. This decision is especially perplexing when significant revenues will be generated by Kirkland over the life of the proposed plan and the current investments proposed by Sound Transit for Kirkland come nowhere near the value of those revenues.

It is our hope that the Sound Transit Board will reconsider the level of investment in Kirkland and the Eastside and we therefore offer the following suggested changes to the Draft System Plan:

High Capacity Transit on the Cross Kirkland Corridor

First, and most importantly, Kirkland requests that Sound Transit add HCT service on the CKC as our top priority in the final ST 3 System Plan. The Kirkland City Council voted in January in support "light rail with flexibility" on the CKC, with the mode choice to be decided over time after more study and community input. Including HCT service on the CKC as "light rail with flexibility" will allow the City of Kirkland to work together with Sound Transit and our residents and businesses to determine the most appropriate type of service for this corridor and our community.

HCT Environmental Study from Bothell to Bellevue via Kirkland

Kirkland appreciates that Sound Transit included a study of HCT options on the CKC leading to a Record of Decision in the ST 3 draft plan. If no service is provided in the measure, the study does demonstrate Sound Transit's commitment that there should eventually be transit on the corridor. Kirkland requests that the scope of this study also clearly identify light rail on I-405 from Bellevue to Totem Lake as one alternative option to be evaluated.

In addition, Kirkland also requests that a new study be included in ST 3 that evaluates light rail from Downtown Redmond along Willows Road and connecting to the Totem Lake Urban Center.

NE 85th Street Inline Station on I-405

Kirkland wishes to thank the Sound Transit Board for including the inline station at I-405 and NE 85th Street and transit lanes from the station to Downtown Kirkland as we requested. The Sound Transit staff description of this project has transit lanes only extending west from I-405 to Downtown, but the March 24th letter from the Board Chair and the Eastside Board Members states that the transit lanes would continue east towards Redmond, ending at 132nd Ave NE. Kirkland requests that transit lanes extend east along NE 85th as far as is feasible given the constraints of the roadway.

Kirkland also requests a significant additional investment in bicycle/pedestrian access funds to the NE 85th Street inline station to ensure safe and convenient access to the transit lanes, to the station access point, and connections to the CKC at NE 85th Street to encourage as many transit riders as possible to access the new station.

Totem Lake/Kingsgate Park and Ride

Kirkland believes that the Kingsgate Park and Ride is an ideal location for a Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The TOD will be served by the new Bus Rapid Transit on I-405 as well as the nearby Totem Lake Transit Center. The Park and Ride is surrounded by multi-family residences and is near the redeveloping Totem Lake Mall and also Evergreen Health, Kirkland's largest employer. The City is committed to implementing any land-use and regulatory steps necessary to support the TOD development. Therefore Kirkland requests that Sound Transit designate the Kingsgate Park and Ride as a preferred location for a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and take whatever actions are appropriate to facilitate a TOD project there.

In addition, there are safety concerns at the existing Sound Transit inline station at NE 128th. Pedestrians and cyclists must cross several busy lanes of traffic to catch Sound Transit and Metro buses. To help make this location much more bicycle and pedestrian friendly, and to bring non-motorized travelers to the transit service, Kirkland requests robust bicycle/pedestrian access funds to create connections from the CKC and Totem Lake Urban Center to the Sound Transit service at the 128th Freeway Station and the Kingsgate Park and Ride.

South Kirkland Park and Ride Light Rail Extension

Finally, as communicated earlier this month via email, Kirkland wishes to accept the offer in the March 24 letter from Chair Constantine and the Eastside Board Members to explore an extension of light rail from the Wilburton Station to the South Kirkland Park and Ride (SKPR). This connection could have benefits to both Bellevue and Kirkland, but the value of this potential link must be understood before either Kirkland or the Sound Transit Board can decide whether to support this investment.

As part of the initial scope, Kirkland requests that an additional parking garage be included in the project and that the traffic impacts of a light rail connection be considered as part of the SKPR light rail evaluation.

Kirkland also requests that robust bicycle/pedestrian access funds and transit access improvement funds be included as part of the SKPR light rail evaluation. If done appropriately, a light rail station could be a major terminus for non-motorized access and bus service from Kirkland.

If Sound Transit elects to include light rail service from Bellevue to the South Kirkland Park and Ride, Kirkland may also want to explore whether alternative transit investments to the NE 85th Inline Station could better utilize the station and better serve Kirkland and the region.

We look forward to working closely with the Sound Transit Board to finalize an ST 3 System Plan that can be supported by both the region and Kirkland.

Sincerely,
Kirkland City Council



Amy Walen
Mayor

Enclosures

cc: Sound Transit Board
Kirkland City Council



October 8, 2015

Secretary Lynn Peterson
Washington State Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 47316
Olympia, WA 98504-7316

RE: City of Kirkland's Interest in Developing TOD at the Kingsgate Park and Ride

Dear Secretary Peterson,

On behalf of the City of Kirkland, I write this letter to express the City's interest in developing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at the Kingsgate Park and Ride. The City will assist WSDOT in its work with USDOT on any work/research that might need to be done to advance this interest.

We are grateful that you and your staff took time to visit Kirkland in June of this year to tour several sites, including the Kingsgate Park and Ride with myself, Deputy Mayor Sweet, Representative McBride and our City Manager, Kurt Triplett.

The Kingsgate Park and Ride is owned by WSDOT and operated by King County Metro Transit. It is located just east of I-405 at NE 130th Street, adjacent to the Totem Lake Urban Center. Sound Transit's Totem Lake Freeway Station is located across the street from the site, as are the NE 128th Street direct access ramps for northbound and southbound HOV lanes on I-405. King County Metro's Totem Lake Transit Center is located five blocks east on the southwest corner of the hospital campus of EvergreenHealth. Totem Lake, is Kirkland's largest employment center and is the focus of significant economic revitalization. By 2035, Totem Lake is expected to double its housing units to approximately 12,000 units. Employment is expected to increase from today's 13,000 employees to approximately 52,000 employees.

The City continues to invest in significant multimodal connectivity capital projects in anticipation of connection to the I-405 high capacity transit spine and Kirkland has prioritized pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure investments around access to transit facilities. WSDOT's willingness to work with the City on its interest in developing a TOD at the Kingsgate site left us hopeful for the future of maximizing the livability of the Totem Lake area.

We appreciate the enormous responsibility you carry as the Secretary of Transportation and look forward to working with your staff on next steps. The City's point of contact for this is Dorian Collins at (425) 587-3249 or email dcollins@kirklandwa.gov.

Sincerely,

KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL



By Amy Walen, Mayor
City of Kirkland

Cc: Lorena Eng, Northwest Region Administrator
Allison Camden, Intergovernmental and Tribal Relations Director
Kirkland City Council
Kurt Triplett, City Manager
Eric Shields, Director, Planning and Building Department
Dorian Collins, Senior Planner, Planning and Building Department
Lorrie McKay, Intergovernmental Relations Manager



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Lynn Peterson
Secretary of Transportation

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February 1, 2016

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FEB 04 2016

**CITY OF KIRKLAND
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**

The Honorable Amy Walen
City of Kirkland
123 Fifth Avenue
Kirkland, WA 98033-6189

Dear Mayor Walen:

Thank you for your October 8th letter regarding the City's interest in developing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at the Kingsgate Park and Ride in Kirkland. Please accept our apology for the delay in our response.

With Kingsgate being the City's priority for TOD, we look forward to working with USDOT and the City to determine the steps necessary to make this happen with the state owned Park and Ride lot.

Please feel free to contact Dylan Counts, of our Public Transportation Division at (206) 464-1232 or email countsd@wsdot.wa.gov, with questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Lynn Peterson
Secretary of Transportation

cc: Lorena Eng, Northwest Region Administrator
Allison Camden, Intergovernmental and Tribal Relations Director
Kirkland City Council
Kurt Triplett, City Manager
Eric Shields, Director, Planning and Building Department
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